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Contents :

Plate :

Jaina Mithology

J. BURGESS

The mythology of the Jainas, whilst including many of the Hindu divinities, to which it accords very inferior positions, is altogether different in composition. It has all the appearance of a purely constructed system. The gods are classified and subdivided into orders, general and species ; all are mortal, have their ages fixed as well as their abodes and are mostly distinguished by cognizances, *ciṇhas* or *lāñchanas*. Their Tirthakaras, Tirthankaras, or perfected saints, are usually known as twenty-four belonging to the present age. But the mythology takes account also of a past and a future age, and to each of these aeons are assigned. But this is not all ; in their cosmogony they lay down other continents besides Jambudvipa-Bharata or that in which we dwell. These are separated from Jambudvipa by impassable seas, but exactly like it in every respect are continents called Dhatakikhanda and Puskararddha; and of each of these there are eastern and western Bharata and Airavata regions, whilst of Jambudvipa there is only a Bharata and an Airavata region. These make the following ten regions or worlds :

1. Jambudvipa Bharata-ksetra
2. Dhatakikhanda purva-Bharata
3. Dhatakikhanda pascima-Bharata
4. Puskararddha purva-Bharata
5. Puskararddha pascima-Bharata
6. Jambudvipa Airavata-ksetra
7. Dhatakikhanda purva-Airavata
8. Dhatakikhanda pascima-Airavata
9. Puskarardha purva-Airavata
10. Puskararddha pascima-Airavata

To each of these is alloted twenty-four past, present and future Jinas, making in all 720 of this class, for which they have invented names, but they are only names[1].

Of the Tirthakaras of the present age or *avasarpinī* in the Bharatavarsa of Jambudvipa, however, we are supplied with minute details :

[1] See *Ratnasagara, bh.* II, pp. 696-705.

their names, parents, stations, reputed ages, complexions, attendants, cognizances (*cinhas*) or characteristics, etc. and these details are useful for the explanation of the iconography we meet within the shrines of Jaina temples. There the images of the Tirthakaras are placed on highly sculptured thrones and surrounded by other smaller attendant figures. In temples of the Svetambara sect the images are generally of marble—white in most cases, but often black for images of the 19th, 20th, 22nd and 23rd Jinas. On the front of the throne or *āsana* are usually carved three small figures, at the proper right of the Jina is a male figure representing the Yaksa attendant or servant of that particular Jina, at the left end of the throne is the corresponding female—or Yaksini, Yaksi or Sasanadevi, whilst in a panel in the middle there is often another Devi. At the base of the seat also, are placed nine very small figures representing the *navagraha* or nine planets, that is the sun, moon, five planets, and ascending and descending nodes.

In the Jaina *Purāṇas*, legends are given to account for the connexion of the Yaksas and Yaksis with their respective Tirthakaras. Thus, in the case of Parsvanatha, we have a story of two brothers Marubhuti and Kamatha, who in eight successive incarnations were always enemies, and were finally born as Parsvanatha and Samvaradeva respectively A *pāṣaṇḍa* or unbeliever, engaged in the *pañcagni* rite, when felling a tree for his fire, against the remonstrance of Parsvanatha, cut in pieces two snakes that were in it ; the Jina, however, restored them to life by means of the *pañca-parameṣthi-mantra*. They were then re-born in Patala-loka as Dharanendra or Nagendra-Yaksa and Padmavati-Yaksini When Samvaradeva or Meghakumara afterwards attacked the Arhat with a great storm, whilst he was engaged in the *kāyotsarga* austerity--standing immovable, exposed to the weather much in the way that Mara attacked Sakya Buddha at Bodhgaya, Dharanendra's throne in Patala thereupon shook, and the Naga or Yaksa with his consort at once sped to the protection of his former benefactor. Dharanendra spread his many hoods over the head of the Arhat and the Yaksini Padmavati held a white umbrella (*śveta chatri*) over him for protection. Ever after they became his constant attendants, just as Sakra was to Buddha. The legend is often represented in old sculptures, in the cave temples at Badami, Elura, etc., and the figure of Parsva is generally carved with the snake hoods (*śeṣaphaṇī*) over him[2].

[2] *Cave Temples*, pp 491, 496: *Arch. Sur. Westn India*, Vol. 1, p. 25 and pl xxxvii, Vol V, p 49, *Transactions R As. Soc*, Vol I, p 435 At Ranpur in Godwar, in the temple of Rsabhanatha is a finely carved slab representing Parsvanatha in the *kayotsarga* position, attended by snake divinities, *Archit. and Scenery in Gujarat and Rajputana*, p 21 The story has variants, conf., *Ind. Ant*, Vol XXX, p. 302.

Other legends account for the attachment of each pair of Sasanadevatas to their respective Jinas.

The Svetambaras and Digambaras agree generally in the details respecting the different Tirthakaras ; but, from information furnished from Maisur, they seem to differ as to the names of the Yaksinis attached to the several Tirthakaras, except the first and the last two ; they differ also in the names of several of the Jinas of the past and the future aeons. The Digambaras enlist most of the sixteen Vidyadevis or goddesses of knowledge among the Yaksinis, whilst the other sect include scarcely a third of them.

These Vidyadevis, as given by Hemacandra[3], are—(1) Rohini ; (2) Prajnapti ; (3) Vajrasrnkhala ; (4) Kulisankusa—probably the Ankusa Yaksi of the Svetambara fourteenth Jina ; (5) Cakresvari ; (6) Naradatta or Purusadatta ; (7) Kali or Kalika ; (8) Mahakali ; (9) Gauri ; (10) Gandhari ; (11) Sarvastramahajvala ; (12) Manavi ; (13) Vairotya ; (14) Acchupta ; (15) Manasi ; and (16) Mahamanasika.

The images of the Tirthakaras are always represented seated with their legs crossed in front—the toes of one foot resting close upon the knee of the other ; and the right hand lies over the left in the lap. All are represented exactly alike except that Parsvanatha, the twenty-third, has the snake-hoods over him ; and with the Digambaras, Suparsva, the seventh, has also a smaller group of snake hoods. The Digambara images are all quite nude ; those of the Svetambaras are represented as clothed, and they decorate them with crowns and ornaments. They are distinguished from one another by their attendant Yaksas and Yaksinis as well as by their respective *cinhas* or cognizances which are carved on the cushion of the throne.

All the Jinas are ascribed to the Iksvaku family (*kula*) except the twentieth Munisuvrata and twenty-second Neminatha, who were of the Harivamsa race.

All received *dīkṣā*[4] or consecration at their native places ; and all obtained *jñāna* or complete enlightenment at the same, except Rsabha who became a Kevalin at Purimatala, Nemi at Girnar, and Mahavira at the Rjubaluka river ; and twenty of them died or obtained *mokṣa* (deliverance in bliss) on Sammeta Sikhara or Mount Parsvanatha in the

[3] *Jour. Asiat.* IXme Ser. tome, XIX, p. 260.

[4] For an account of the ritual of the Svetambara sect of Jainas, see my account in the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XIII, pp. 191-196.

west of Bengal. But Rsabha, the first, died on Astapada—supposed to be Satrunjaya in Gujarat ; Vasupujya died at Campapuri in north Bengal ; Neminatha on mount Girnar ; and Mahavira, the last, at Pavapuri.

Twenty-one of the Tirthakaras are said to have attained *mokṣa* in the *kāyotsarga* (Guj, *kāusagga*) posture, and Rsabha, Nemi, and Mahavira on the *padmāsana*.

For the sake of brevity the following particulars for each Arhat are given below in serial order, viz [5] :

(1) The *vimāna* (heaven) from which he descended for incarnation ;
(2) Birthplace, and place of consecration or *dīkṣā* ;
(3) Names of father and mother ;
(4) Complexion ;
(5) Cognizance—*cinha* or *lāñchana* ;
(6) Height ;
(7) Age ;
(8) *Dīkṣā-vṛkṣa* or *Bodhi* tree.
(9) Yaksa and Yaksini, or attendant spirits;
(10) First Ganadhara or leading disciple, and first Arya or leader of the female converts.

I. Rsabhadeva, Vrsabha, Adinatha or Adisvara Bhagavan[6] : (1) Sarvarthasiddha ; (2) Vinitanagari in Kosala and Purimatala ; (3) Nabhiraja by Marudevi ; (4) golden ; (5) the bull—*vṛṣa* ; (6) 500 poles or *dhanuṣa* ; (7) 8,400,000 *pūrva* or great years ; (8) the *Vata* or Banyan tree ; (9) Gomukha and Cakresvari ; (10) Pundarika and Brahmi.

II. Ajitanatha : (1) Vijaya , (2) Ayodhya ; (3) Jitasatru by Vijaya ; (4) golden ; (5) the elephant—*gaja* or *hastī* ; (6) 450 poles ; (7) 7,200,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) *Sala* - the Shorea Robusta ; (9) Mahayaksa and Ajitabala, (with the Digambaras the Yakshini is Rohini) ; (10) Simhasena and Phalgu

III. Sambhavanatha : (1) Uvarimagraiveyaka ; (2) Savatthi or Sravasti ; (3) Jitari by Sena ; (4) golden ; (5) the horse--*aśva*, *ghoḍā* ;

[5] The Digambaras describe the colours of the seventh and twentyfirst Jinas as *marakata* or emerald coloured.

[6] Conf *Ratnasagara*, *bh*. II, pp. 616, 618, *Jour Asiat*. IXme Ser. tome, XIX, p. 259; *Sac. Bks Eas* , vol. XLV, p. 226 f. See also *Rev. de l'Histoire des Relig* tom. XLVII, pp. 34-50, which has appeared since the above was written, for "La doctrine desetres vivants dans la Religion Jaina".

(6) 400 poles ; (7) 6,000,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) the *Prayala*—Buchanania Latifolia ; (9) Trimukha and Duritari, (Digambara Prajnapti) ; (10) Chara and Syama.

IV. Abhinandana : (1) Jayanta ; (2) Ayodhya ; (3) Sambara by Siddhartha ; (4) golden ; (5) the ape—*plavaga*, *vānara* or *kapi*, (6) 350 poles ; (7) 5,000,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) the *priyangu* or Panicum Italicum ; (9) Nayoka and Kalika, (Dig. Yaksesvara and Vajrasrnkhala) ; (10) Vajranabha and Ajita.

V. Sumatinatha : (1) Jayanta ; (2) Ayodhya ; (3) Megha by Mangala ; (4) golden ; (5) the curlew—*krauñca*, (Dig. *cakravākapakṣī*—the Brahmani or red goose) ; (6) 300 poles ; (7) 4,000,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) *Sāla* tree ; (9) Tumburu and Mahakali, (Dig. Purusadatta) ; (10) Carama and Kasyapi

VI. Padmaprabha : (1) Uvarimagraiveyaka ; (2) Kausambi ; (3) Sridhara by Susima ; (4) red (*rakta*) ; (5) a lotus bud—*padma*, *abja* or *kamala* ; (6) 250 poles ; (7) 3,000,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) the *Chatra*—Anethum Sowa (?) ; (9) Kusuma and Syama, (Dig. Manovega or Manogupti) ; (10) Pradyotana and Rati.

VII. Suparsvanatha : (1) Madhyamagraiveyaka (2) Varanasi ; (3) Pratistha by Prithvi ; (4) golden ; (5) the *svastika* symbol ; (6) 200 poles, (7) 2,000,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) the *Sirīṣa* or Acacia Sirisha ; (9) Matanga and Santa, (Dig. Varanandi and Kali) ; (10) Vidirbha and Soma.

VIII. Chandraprabha : (1) Vijayanta ; (2) Candrapura ; (3) Mahasena by Laksmana ; (4) white—*dhavala*, *śubhra* ; (5) the moon—*candra* or *śaśī* ; (6) 150 poles ; (7) 1,000,000 *pūrva* years, (8) the *Nāga* tree ; (9) Vijaya and Bhrikuti, (Dig. Syama or Vijaya and Jvalamalini) ; (10) Dinna and Sumana.

IX. Suvidhinatha or Puspadanta : (1) Anatadevaloka , (2) Kakandinagari ; (3) Sugriva by Rama ; (4) white ; (5) the *Makara*, (Dig. the crab—*edi*); (6) 100 poles , (7) 200,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) the *Sāli* , (9) Ajita and Sutaraka, (Dig. Ajita and Mahakali or Ajita); (10) Varahaka and Varuni

X Sitalanatha : (1) Acyutadevaloka; (2) Bhadrapura or Bhaddilapura; (3) Drdharatha by Nanda; (4) golden; (5) the *Srīvatsa* figure; (6) 90 poles ; (7) 100,000 *pūrva* years ; (8) the *Priyangu* tree, (Dig. *Sri-vṛkṣa*, the Ficus Religiosa) ;(9) Brahma and Asoka, (Dig. Manavi) ; (10) Nanda and Sujasa.

XI. Sreyansanatha or Sreysa : (1) Acyutadevaloka ; (2) Simhapuri ; (3) Visnu by Visna ; (4) golden, (5) the rhinoceros—*khadga, genda*, (Dig. *Garuda*) ; (6) 80 poles ; (7) 8,400,000 common years ; (8) the *Tinduka* tree ; (9) Yakset and Manavi, (Dig. Isvara and Gauri) ; (10) Kasyapa and Dharani.

XII. Vasupujya : (1) Pranatadevaloka ; (2) Campapuri ; (3) Vasupujya by Jaya ; (4) ruddy—*rakta*, Guj *ratun* ; (5) the female buffalo—*mahisi, pada* , (6) 70 poles ; (7) 7,200,000 common years ; (8) the *Patala* or Bignonia Suaveolens ; (9) Kumara and Canda, (Dig. Gandhari) ; (10) Subhuma and Dharani.

XIII. Vimalanatha : (1) Mahasaradevaloka ; (2) Kampilyapura ; (3) Krtavarma by Syama ; (4) golden ; (5) a boar—*śukara, varāha* ; (6) 60 poles ; (7) 6,000,000 years ; (8) the *Jambu* or Eugenia Jambolana ; (9) Sanmukha and Vidita, (Dig. Vairoti), (10) Mandara and Dhara.

XIV. Anantanatha or Anantajit : (1) Pranatadevaloka ; (2) Ayodhya ; (3) Simhasena by Suyasa or Sujasa ; (4) golden ; (5) a falcon—*śyena*, (Dig *bhālluka*, a bear) ; (6) 50 poles ; (7) 3,000,000 years ; (8) the *Aśoka* or Jonesia Asoka ; (9) Patala and Ankusa, (Dig. Anantamati) ; (10) Jasa and Padma.

XV. Dharmanatha : (1) Vijaya ; (2) Ratnapuri ; (3) Bhanur by Suvrata ; (4) golden ; (5) the thunderbolt—*vajra* ; (6) 45 poles ; (7) 1,000,000 years ; (8) *Dadhiparna* tree or Chitori Ternates[7] ; (9) Kinnara and Kandarpa, (Dig. Manasi) ; (10) Arisata and Arthasiva.

XVI. Santinatha : (1) Sarvarthasiddha ; (2) Gajapura or Hastinapuri ; (3) Visvasena by Acira ; (4) golden ; (5) an antelope—*mrga, harina, hulle* ; (6) 40 poles ; (7) 1,000,000 years ; (8) the *Nandī* or Cedrela Toona ; (9) Garuda and Nirvani, (Dig. Kimpurusa and Mahamanasi) ; (10) Cakrayudha and Suci.

XVII Kunthunatha : (1) Sarvarthasiddha ; (2) Gajapura ; (3) Sura by Sri ; (4) golden ; (5) a goat—*chāga* or *aja* ; (6) 35 poles ; (7) 95,000 years ; (8) the *Bhilaka* tree ; (9) Gandharva and Bala, (Dig. Vijaya) ; (10) Samba and Damini.

XVIII. Aranatha : (1) Sarvarthasiddha ; (2) Gajapura ; (3) Sudarsana by Devi ; (4) golden ; (5) the *Nandyāvarta*, (Dig. *Mīna*—the zodiacal

[7] The gourd Lagenaria Vulgaris

Pisces) ; (6) 30 poles ; (7) 84,000 years ; (8) *Āmra* or Mango tree ; (9) Yakseta and Dhana, (Dig. Kendra and Ajita); (10) Kumbha and Raksita.

XIX. Mallinatha: (1) Jayantadevaloka; (2) Mathura; (3) Kumbharaja by Prabhavati ; (4) blue—*nīla* ; (5) a jar—*kumbha, kalasa* or *ghaṭa* ; (6) 25 poles ; (7) 55,000 years ; (8) *Aśoka* tree ; (9) Kubera and Dharananpriya, (Dig. Aparajita) ; (10) Abhiksakha and Bandhumati.

XX. Munisuvrata, Suvrata or Muni : (1) Aparajita devaloka ; (2) Rajagrha ; (3) Sumitra by Padmavati ; (4) black—*śyāma, asīta* ; (5) a tortoise—*kūrma* ; (6) 20 poles ; (7) 30,000 years ; (8) the *Campaka*, Michelia Champaka ; (9) Varuna and Naradatta, (Dig. Bahurupini) ; (10) Malli and Pushpavati.

XXI. Naminatha, Nami or Namesvara : (1) Pranatadevaloka ; (2) Mathura ; (3) Vijaya by Vipra ; (4) Yellow ; (5) the blue waterlily—*nīlotpala*, (Dig. sometimes the *Asoka* tree) ; (6) 15 poles ; (7) 10,000 years ; (8) the *Bakula* or Mimusops Clengi ; (9) Bhrkuti and Gandhari, (Dig. Camundi) ; (10) Subha and Anila.

XXII. Neminatha or Aristanemi : (1) Aparajita ; (2) Sauripura (Prakrit, Soriyapura) and Ujjayanta or Mount Girnar ; (3) Samudravijaya by Sivadevi ; (4) black—*śyāma* ; (5) a conch—*śankha* ; (6) 10 poles ; (7) 1000 years ; (8) the *Vetasa*; (9) Gomedha and Ambika, (Dig. Sarvanna and Kusmandini ; (10) Varadatta and Yaksadinna.

XXIII. Parsvanatha : (1) Pranatadevaloka ; (2) Varanasi and Sameta-Sikhara ; (3) Asvasena by Vamadevi ; (4) blue—*nīla* ; (5) a serpent—*sarpa* ; (6) 9 hands ; (7) 100 years ; (8) the *Dhātakī* or Grislea Tomentosa ; (9) Parsvayaksa or Dharanendra and Padmavati ; (10) Aryadinna and Puspacuda.

XXIV. Mahavira, Vardhamana or Vira, the Sramana : (1) Pranatadevaloka ; (2) Kundagrama or Citrakūta and Rjubaluka ; (3) Siddhartha, Sreyansa or Yasasvin by Trisala Videhadinna or Priyakarini ; (4) yellow ; (5) a lion—*keśarī, simha* ; (6) 7 hands or cubits ; (7) 72 years; (8) the *Sāla* or Teak tree; (9) Matanga and Siddhayika ; (10) Indrabhuti and Candnabala.

The Tirthakaras may be regarded as the *dii majores* of the Jainas, though, having become Siddhas, emancipated from all concern, they can have no interest in mundane affairs. They and such beings aş are supposed to have reached perfection are divided into fifteen species :

1. Tirthakarasiddhas
2. Atirthakarasiddhas
3. Tirthasiddhas
4. Svalingasiddhas
5. Anyalingasiddhas
6. Strilingasiddhas
7. Purusalingasiddhas
8. Napumsakalingasiddhas
9. Grhalingasiddhas
10. Tirthavyavacchedasiddhas
11. Pratyekbuddhasiddhas
12. Svayambuddhasiddhas
13. Ekasiddas
14. Anekasiddhas
15. Buddhabodhietasiddhas

But the gods are divided into four classes, and each class into several orders : the four classes are :

I. Bhavanadhipatis, Bhavanavasins or Bhaumeyikas, of which there are ten orders :

1. Asurakumaras
2. Nagakumaras
3. Taditkumaras or Vidyutkumaras
4. Suvarna or Suparnakakumaras
5. Agnikumaras
6. Dvipakumaras (Divakumaras)
7. Udadhikumaras
8. Dikkumaras
9. Pavana or Vatakumaras
10 Ghanika or Stanitakumaras

II. Vyantaras or Vanamantaras, who live in woods, are of eight classes :

1. Pisacas
2. Bhutas
3. Yaksas
4. Raksasas
5. Kinnaras
6. Kimpurusas
7. Mahoragas
8. Gandharvas

III. The Jyotiskas are the inhabitants of :
1. Candras or the moons
2. Suryas or the suns
3. Grahas or the planets
4. Naksatras or the constellations
5. Taras or the hosts of stars

And IV. The Vaimanika gods are of two orders:
(1) the Kalpabhavas, who are born in the heavenly Kalpas, and
(2) the Kalpatitas, born in the regions above the Kalpas.

(1) The Kalpabhavas again are subdivided into twelve genera who live in the Kalpas after which they are named, viz. :
1. Saudharma
2. Isana
3. Sanatkumara
4. Mahendra
5. Brahmaloka
6 Lantaka
7. Sukra or Mahasukra
8. Sahasrara
9. Anata (Anaya)
10. Pranata (Panaya)
11. Arana
12. Acyuta

(2) The Kalpatitas are subdivided into (a) the Graiveyakas, living on the upper part of the universe, and (b) the Anuttaras or those above whom there are no others.
(a) The Graiveyakas are of nine species :
1. Sudarsanas
2. Supratipannas
3. Manoramas
4. Sarvabhadras
5. Suvisalas
6. Somanasas
7. Sumankasas
8. Priyankaras
9. Adityas or Nandikaras

And (b) the Anuttara gods are of five orders :
1. Vijayas
2. Vaijayantas

3. Jayantas
4. Aparajitas
5. Sarvarthasiddhas

These Anuttara gods inhabit the highest heavens where they live for varying lengths of time as the heavens ascend ; and in the fifth or highest —the great *vimāna* called Sarvarthasiddha—they all live thirty-three *sāgaropamas* or periods of unimaginable duration. Still all the gods are mortal or belong to the *samsāra*

Above these is the paradise or the Siddhas or perfected souls, and the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra* gives the following details of this realm of the perfected, or the paradise of the Jinas[8] :

"The perfected souls are those of women, men, hermaphrodites, of orthodox, heterodox, and house-holders Perfection is reached by people of the greatest, smallest and middle size[9] ; on high places, underground, on the surface of the earth in the ocean, and in waters (of rivers, etc.).

"Ten hermaphrodites reach perfection at the same time, twenty women, one hundred and eight men, four householders, ten heterodox, and one hundred and eight orthodox monks

"Two individuals of the greatest size reach perfection (simultaneously), four of the smallest size, and one hundred and eight of the middle size. Four individuals reach perfection (simultaneously) on high places, two in the ocean, three in water, twenty underground . . . and where do they go on reaching perfection ? Perfected souls are debarred from the non-world (*Aloka*) ; they reside on the top of the world ; they leave bodies here (below) and go there, on reaching perfection.

"Twelve *yojanas* above the (*vimāna*) Sarvartha is the place called Isatpragbhara, which has the form of an umbrella ; (there the perfected

[8] On the Jaina Paradise Dr. Buhler seems here to have confounded the *Aloka* or Non-world, 'the space where only things without life are found', with the heaven of the Siddhas, but these are living beings who have crossed the boundary of the *samsara* and attained perfection Their dwelling place is above that of the highest of the Anuttara gods. The following extract is from *Sac. Books of the East*, Vol. XLV, pp. 211-213

[9] The greatest size—*ogahana* of men is 500 *dhanus* or 3000 cubits, the smallest is one cubit.

souls go). It is forty-five hundred thousand *yojanas* long, and as many broad, and it is somewhat more than three times as many in circumference. Its thickness is eight *yojanas*, it is greatest in the middle, and decreases towards the margin, till it is thinner than the wing of a fly. This place, by nature pure, consisting of white gold, resembles in form an open umbrella, as has been said by the best of Jinas.

"(Above it) is a pure blessed place (called Sita), which is white like a conch-shell, the *anka*-stone, and *Kunda*-flowers, a *yojana* thence is the end of the world. The perfected souls penetrate the sixth part of the uppermost *krosa* of the (above-mentioned) *yojana*. There, at the top of the world reside the blessed perfected souls, rid of all transmigration, and arrived at the excellent state of perfection. The dimension of a perfected soul is two-thirds of the height which the individual had in his last existence.

"The perfected souls considered singly—*egattena* (as individuals) —have a beginning but no end, considered collectively—*buhuttena* (as a class)—they have neither a beginning nor an end.

"They have no visible form, they consist of life throughout, they are developed into knowledge and faith . . . they have crossed the boundry of the *samsāra*, and reached the excellent state of perfection."

Like both the Brahmanas and Buddhists, the Jainas have a series of hells—*Narakas*, numbering seven which they name :

1. Ratnaprabha
2. Sarkaraprabha
3. Valukaprabha
4. Pankaprabha
5. Dhumaprabha
6. Tamaprabha
7. Tamatamaprabha

Those who inhibit the seventh hell have a stature of 500 poles, and in each above that they are half the height of the one below it.

Everything in the system as to stature of gods and living beings, their ages and periods of transmigration is reduced to artificial numbers.

Some Aspects of Socio-Economic Life from the Jaina Canonical Literature

ADHIR CHAKRAVARTI

Lord Mahavira and the Buddha hailed from more or less the same region of the country, viz., North-Eastern India and were close contemporaries. Hence the socio-economic background of Jainism and early Buddhism was the same. This fact has given rise to a tendency amongst scholars to gloss over facts gleaned from the early Jaina texts. Instead, after stating the Buddhist point of view on any aspect of society and economy, one says that the same may be said from the Jaina texts as well. It is, however, conveniently forgotten that the geographical horizen of Jainism was much wider. It comprised the Ladha country with its two sub-divisions, Suhmabhumi (Burdwan and Birbhum districts) and Vajjabhumi (possibly Midnapore district), Tomalitti (Tamralipti, modern Tamluk) in the east and Sauviradesa (Sovira of the Buddhist texts, Lower Indus Valley) in the west. This is why the social and economic condition of India as reflected in the early Jaina texts is likely to be more varied. Hence a study of the socio-economic data contained in these will not be mere repetitions of what is known from the Buddhist sources. However, such a study suffers from two inherrent limitations. In the first place, the Jaina canonical literature primarily refers to the Svetamvara scriptures since the position of the text of the Digamvara sect still remains to be determined. This literature was composed and compiled in different parts of the country at different times and by different persons. Hence without a rigid stratification according to chronology and region of composition of the data contained in these texts by means of comparative and critical method there will always be the possibility of projecting a condition prevalent at a later date as valid for an earlier epoch. It is indeed not unlikely that some institution prevalent in West India in the fifth century A D. may be interpreted as true of Magadha in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. In the second place, there is no systematic discussion in our texts of the social and economic organisation or condition of India. What information regarding these can be had is from casual references many of which are unique of their kind, with the result that our knowledge of the socio-economic life from these texts is necessarily incomplete and any deduction from these will be, to

say the least, hypothetical. In this small paper no attempt can be made at stratification of our texts. We shall remain content only with the presentation of certain informations which, according to persistent tradition, are associated with the Tirthankaras and their contemporaries, religious and laic.

Before undertaking a discussion of our subject properly speaking, a little digression may be allowed. It may be interesting to point out what may be called the reflection of a confused social memory of the introduction of the elements of civilization in India. According to tradition, Rsabha, the first Tirthankara taught mankind the use of fire, the art of cooking food, building huts, cultivation of land, domestication of animals, pottery and weaving. It was he who first constructed walled towns and established markets. In terms of modern archaeology these meant the neolithic revolution and from the sociological point of view, the transition from savagery to barbarism. What is more, the account does not stop here. It is stated further that he taught mankind the art of the blacksmith and how to write. The former signifies the introduction of the Iron Age and the latter, the dawn of civilization in the sociological sense of the term. To the student of ancient Indian history, the story is of immense value and attempt should be made to reconcile the dates of Rsabha and the introduction of iron in India.

In our texts family is the smallest unit of society. Frequently three generations of agnates lived under the same roof. Family organization was from the very beginning patriarchal. Vimalavahana was the first patriarch (*kulakara*) and the seventh and last in the series was Nabhi, the father of Rsabha. The name of the family is mentioned among the eight objects of pride. Much pride was actually taken in the distinction of *gotras* which were said to be of two kinds, good and bad. The *gotra* names are mostly the same as the Brahmanical ones. Thus Rsabha and Mahavira belonged to the Kasyapa *gotra*. Udaka, the son of Pedhala and a follower of Parsva was of the Metarya *gotra*. According to the *Kalpa Sūtra* famous *sthaviras* had all *gotra* affiliations : Aryavyakta was a Bharadvaja ; Arya Sudharman an Agnivesyayana ; Manditaputra a Vasistha and Mauryaputra a Kasyapa. As such, it is understandable that succession will be through males and not through females. It may even be presumed that the law of primogeniture was in vogue. Thus, Nandivardhana, the elder brother of Vardhamana Mahavira succeeded their father Siddhartha. However, attention may be drawn to the fact that king Udayana of Sauviradesa had a son named Abhi but he was succeeded to the throne by his nephew Kesi. By way of explanation the text states that the king was anxious to save his son

from attachment of the world. This only goes to show that the measure taken by king Udayana was contrary to normal practice and there is no reason to see in it the prevalence of matriarchy as held by B. C. Law.

The head of the family had unlimited power over the other members of the family. This may be illustrated with the help of a few examples. When famine broke out, Sujjhasiva, a poor Brahmana sold his daughter Sujjhasiri to a rich Brahmana overseer Mahanagovinda. Rsabhadatta was a Brahmana begger. His son Amarakumara possessed all the signs of a great man. Amarakumara was sold by his father to king Srenika of Rajagrha for sacrifice in the fire.

As for social organization, the system of castes is nowhere denied in the Jaina texts. On the other hand, the *Sūtrakrtānga* clearly mentions it as the very first of the eight objects of pride. The *Āvaśyaka Sutra* equally enjoins that a real monk should not take pride in caste distinction. However, the order of precedence in the social heirarchy did not correspond with that of the castes. Such is at least the picture we get from the *Praśna-Vyākarna* which mentions the transgressors of the vow of *brahmacarya* in the following order ; kings, overlords, chaplains, and high officers, of the state. The same text has a more detailed enumeration with regard to the violations of the fifth vow of *aparigraha* : emperors, Vasudevas, Mandalikas, chieftains, Talavaras, commanders-in-chief, millionaires, bankers, Rastrikas, Purohitas and the like. In neither case the usual caste names are to be found. It is likely that people mentioned in these two lists were the wielders of power whereas the caste distinction was indicative of prestige only. This might have been the case in the early centuries of the Christian era when, viewed from the use of such terms as Talvaras, Mandalikas, Rastrikas etc., the *Praśna-Vyākaraṇa* was compiled

According to the *Kalpa Sūtra* in the Krta age when Rsabha lived, there was only three casts viz Kstriya, Vaisya and Sudra. The non-mention of the Brahmanas is not astonishing since in the Jaina dogma Brahmana is an attribute or the name of a state of existence. As a matter of fact, theoretically a man becomes a Brahmana, Ksatriya, Vaiśya or Sudra according to his actions. In practice, however, the caste distinction was determined by birth. This becomes evident from the distinct mention of *jāti* and *kula* in the *Prajñāpanā*.

Though there is no explicit statement regarding the superiority of the Ksatriyas to the Brahmanas, this is implied in the treatment of the castes in our texts. It is no coincidence that all the Tirthankaras

were born in Ksatriya families : Rsabha was a Kosalan Ksatriya ; Aristanemi was the son of king Samudravijaya of Souripura ; Parsva was born to king Asvasena of Benares and queen Vama of the Iksvaku clan ; finally, Mahavira was also of pure Ksatriya lineage. His father Siddhartha belonged to the Jnatrika clan and mother Trisala was a sister of king Cetaka of Videha.

Similarly, Bhogas who formed a Ksatriya clan, was regarded by Rsabha as worthy of honour by all men. Indeed the Ksatriyas are regarded as the best of people, the opposite being the Candalas. The pride taken by the Ksatriyas in the caste and more particularly in their clans is evident from the remonstrances of Rajimati, the bride-designate of Aristanemi to the latter's elder brother, Rathanemi : "I am the daughter of a Bhoga king and you are an Andhaka-Vrsni. Being born in a noble family let us practise self-control."

Though these Ksatriya clans were all very proud of their birth, it is interesting to note that not all the clans were of equal status. King Cetaka regarded king Srenika of Rajagrha as born in an inferior family. In a latter story king Siddhvaraja of Gujarat considered Kumarapala, son of king Tribhuvanapala as of low descent.

The question which now poses itself is to determine the denotation of the term Ksatriya. Undoubtedly the oligarchic princes of such clans as Jnatrikas, Mallas, Licchavis, Ugras, Bhogas, Iksvakus, etc., who had close association with the early teachers of Jainism were Ksatriyas. But there is at least one example of a very special use of the term. When Aristanemi-Neminatha came to the city of Bharavi, he was given a hearty welcome by the Mallakis, Ugras, Bhogas, Licchavis and the Ksatriyas. In this list excepting the Ksatriyas all the others were clan names. In most cases, however, the term Ksatriya has been used in its usual Brahmanical sense of nobility in general and not in the very restricted sense in which Hopkins in the *Mahābhārata* or Fick in the *Jātakas* understand it. One example will suffice to prove the contention At the time when Rsabha renounced the world and entered the state of homelessness, the event was witnessed by 4000 nobles, royal persons and Ksatriyas.

Details are wanting in the Jaina texts regarding the cultural attainments of the Ksatriyas. But as has already been stated, all the founders of Jainism were Ksatriyas Further, there is the mention of people like Sunaksatra, a Licchavi prince among the lay supporters of the Jaina order ; of Dhanva born in the royal family of king Jitasatru of Kakandi

as joining the order ; of the different Ksatriya tribes coming to Campa to pay homage to Mahavira at the Punnabhadda *ceie* (*Anuttaropapātikadasā*) or of community of wandering Ksatriya monks (*Upapātika Sūtra*). All these tend to show that the Ksatriya nobility of the time kept itself abreast of the intense philosophical and religious upheaval. This, in its turn, presupposes a certain level of intellectual attainment on their part.

Coming to the Brahmanas, theoretically our texts regard them not as forming a caste but rather a category. According to the *Sūtrakrtānga*, a person who is free from all sinful acts like love, hatred, quarrel, calumny, deceit, untruth, etc. is a Brahmana. The *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra* defines a Brahmana in the following terms : "He who has no worldly attachment after entering the Order, who does not repent after having become a monk and who takes delight in the noble words is called a *Brāhmaṇa*. A lean self-subduing ascetic who reduces his flesh and blood, who is pious and who has reached *nirvāṇa* is a *Brāhmaṇa*.... One does not become a *Sramaṇa* by the tonsure, nor a *Brāhmaṇa* by the sacred syllable *Om* nor a *Muni* by living in the forest nor a *Tāpasa* by wearing clothes of *kuśa* grass. One becomes a *Sramaṇa* by equanimity, a *Brāhmana* by chastity, a *Muni* by knowledge and a *Tāpasa* by penance." Brahmana is further described as one completely free of *karma*.

In practice, however, the Brahmanas formed a caste in the same sense as other similar groups. Otherwise, there is no point in stating that some Brahmanas were poor and others were rich for to one free from all *karma*, there is no question of being rich or poor. The life of a Brahmana was normally divided into three stages, viz., brahmacarin when the study of the *Vedas* was enjoined, householder and in old age retiring to the forest to lead the life of hermit. The life of the ascetic was also known. The *Aupapātika Sūtra* makes a distinction between the Brahmana and Ksatriya *parivrajakas* or wandering ascetics. Different kinds of *summum bonum* have been mentioned for men in different stages of life. Thus for the worldly men it is Vanamantara, for the lay worshippers birth in the heaven of Acyutakalpa, for the *vānaprastha tāpasa* the world of Jyotisa (i e celestial) gods, for the *parivrājakas* Brahmaloka, for the Ajivikas Acyutapada. From the above it will be seen that for a Brahmana or a Ksatriya passing through all the successive four stages of life was neither compulsory nor even the usually accepted mode.

It is not necessary to give here a detailed account of each of the four stages of life. However, with regard to the life of the student, a passing

reference may be made to the subjects of study then in vogue. The word *Veda* is sometimes used to signify the sacred law. But generally it stands for the four *Vedas*. Thus the Brahmana wanderer Khandaka (Sandhaka of the Buddhist texts) was proficient in the four *Vedas*, six *Vedāngas*, *Itihāsa-Purāṇa* which was regarded as the fifth *Veda*, *Gaṇita* (mathematics) and the *Saṣtitantra* of the Sankhya philosophy. A more detailed enumeration of the subjects of study is furnished by the *Aupapātika Sūtra*. These include, besides those already mentioned, *Nighaṇṭu* which is called the sixth *Veda*, Kapila, i.e., the Sankhya system of philosophy in general and the Bhargava school of Yoga philosophy. A somewhat later text, the *Anuyogadvāra Sūtra* mentions such new disciplines as Buddhasasanam, Vaisesiyam (Vaisesika philosophy), Logayatam, *Nāṭakas*, Kodiliyam or Kodillayam (Kautiliyam, i.e., *Arthaśāstra*), *Kāmasūtram* of Ghodayamuham (Ghotakamukham), *Vatthuvijjā* (architecture and town-planning) and *Vaddhaki-sippa* (carpentry). The knowledge of medicine presents a queer mixture of a science and superstitious magic. There is mention of eight branches of *Āyurveda* in the *Sthānānga*. These incude *jangoli*, *bhūtavijjā* (charms, exorcisms and spells), *kharatantra* and *rasātaṇa* (*rasayana*). The *Vipāka Sūtra* mentions sixteen kinds of diseases including leprosy and their remedies.

The Jaina canonical literature is replete with admonitions to and injunctions for the householders. From the perusal of these code of conduct which undoubtedly developed through the ages an idea of the ideal Jaina householder may be had but how much of these was actually observed by the Brahmanas or is drawn from their life remains an open question.

As regards the life of the hermit dwelling in the forest, some interesting details of their mode of life may be had from the *Aupapātika Sūtra*. It refers to the hermits as either fireworshippers, family men or sleeping on bare ground. There were among them sacrificers, performers of funeral rites, etc. Some are said to blow conch-shell ; some are beaters of winnow (*kula-dhamakas*) ; some kill deer for venison ; some kill one elephant a year to minimize violence (*hatthi-tāpasas*). Again, for garment some use bark of trees, live by the side of the sea or near water at the root of a tree.

The *Aupapātika Sūtra* mentions four categories of wandering monks viz. *Bahudaka*, *Kuṭivrata* (or *Kuticaka*), *Hamsa* and *Paramahamsa*. The same text contains reference to class of recluses (*pavvaiyā-śamaṇa*) who could not overcome sensual pleasures, vulgar ways, and were bragging

and fond of singing and dancing. Mention is made in the same text of a class of ascetics called *Kṛṣṇa-parivrājakas*. The life of the pious monk was sometimes disturbed by irreligious people. The *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra* states that often fools take pious monk for a spy. However, the Kautilyan precept on the use of religion for expionage is worth remembering in this connection.

To come back to the material life of the Brahmanas, it appears that the chaplain (*purohit*) in the service of the king was the most well-placed among them but unfortunately details are lacking regarding his duties and obligations, prerogatives and privileges. However, to act as priest at religious ceremonies must have been given to him though in the later story of Kumarapala, the son of king Tribhuvanapala, and so a Ksatriya was appointed priest of a temple of Pattana. Some of these religious ceremonies were extremely cruel and included even human sacrifice.

The Jainas recognize five ceremonies called *Pañca-mangalas* the significance of which has been explained in the *Mahānisiha Sūya*. It has been suggested that in these rites as well as acquisition of *mangala* symbols is an attempt by the Jainas to dislodge the Brahmanas of the monopoly control over the religious life of the people

Apart from the officiating at worships, the royal chaplain as also other Brahmanas was required to read the eight signs or omens (*nimitta*) like earthquakes for the sake of divination or prognostication of what was to take place later. Their services were also requisitioned to read the bodily signs (*lakṣana*). Thus Mahavira is declared a *dhamma-vara-cauranta-cakkavatti* by virtue of his having 8000 marks of a great man (*attha-sahassa-vara-puriṣa-lakkhana-dhara*). The number of recognized *lakṣaṇas* has been highly enhanced by the Jainas. The Brahmanas were well versed in *Joiṣa* or what was better known as *Nakkhatta-vijjā* which included both astronomy and astrology. They made forecastes of all future events, whether celestial or terrestrical. Reading of dreams was also practiced by them. There was at first no professional interpreters of dream. That is why the Kulakra Nabhikumara, the father Rsabha, had to interprete the dreams of his wife during her pregnancy. Though the Jaina scriptures do not consider these means of living as tantamount to swindler's trade, we are told that there will be no retribution for those who indulge in divination from the bodily marks and augury. A monk in particular is forbidden to talk to a householder about astrology, significance of dreams, etc.

Before concluding this discussion of the position of the Brahmanas, it may be reiterated that the material condition of the individual

Brahmanas varied. The royal chaplain and few others might have been well off but they were mostly very poor and some like the father of Amarakumara were beggers.

The Vaisyas or the third caste in the Brahmanical caste theory are the producers of wealth. In the Buddhist texts this caste appellation occurs only in theoretical enumerations of the castes. The Jaina scriptures, however, use it rather frequently and more or less in the same sense as in their Brahmanical counterparts. Rich householders are mentioned prominently as lay disciples of the Protestant religions of the time. The patronage that early Buddhism received from the *gāhāpatis* and *setthis* is too well known. Mention may, however, be made of such rich lay Vaisya disciples of Mankhaliputta Gosala as Kundakoliya of Kampillapura, Saddalaputta, a rich potter of Polasapura, Halahala and Ayampula of Sravasti. Among the lay disciples of Mahavira figures the prosperous property-holders like Suradeva, Culanipiya of Benares, Dvaratraya Megha Makati of Rajagrha, Ksemaka and Dhrtihara of Kakandi, Kailasa and Haricandra of Saketa, Sudarsana and Purnabhadra of Vaniyagrama, (i.e., Vaisali), Samarabhadra and Supratistha of Sravasti, etc

The cities were manufacturing centres. It has been noticed above that in Jaina tradition Rsabha taught man hundred kinds of arts which were grouped under five broad heads, viz., pottery, smithy, painting, weaving and the art of the barbar. The *Bhagavatī Sūtra* mentions Saddalaputta as a rich potter of Polasapura. That the blacksmith's trade was highly specialised may be gathered from the name of the king Isukara (Isuyara, Usuyara), i.e , arrow-maker. His prosperity and high social position will be apparent from his being a king. Again, Mankhaliputta Gosala was the son of a painter. Some details of the washerman's trade are available. He is said to use *sodā* (*sajjiyakhāra*) for whitening clothes. We have mention of weavers (*tantuvāya*), makers of silk cloth (*patta-kula*) and tailors (*tunnaga*). Though no details are available of the sixtyfour sciences and arts taught by Rsabha, some of these may be presumed. Reference may be made to the trade of the garland-maker. Some garland-makers like Arjunaka of Rajagrha were quite affluent. Leather-workers manufacturing bags for holding water and ivory carvers are also known. The *Bhagavatī Sūtra* contains the unique references to the war implements, viz. *Mahāśilākaṇtaka* (catapult throwing big stones) and *Ratha-musala* (chariot with which a mace was attached).

The Jaina texts, like their Buddhist counterparts, do not leave any doubt that commodity-poduction came very well to stay, implying the

emergence in society of a strong mercantile and banking element. Internal trade was both overland and riverine. The *Nāyadhammakahāo* mentions different kinds of clothes being loaded in wagons and carried for sale. Trade in horse was known. Indeed Kaliyadiva was noted for its horse-trade. Merchants journeying overland along with their merchandise in caravans used to move in company. Once such a group of merchants stopped at a place where Mahavira was in meditation. In the cold night to warm themselves they made fire round them. This burnt the grass and also caused some burn injury to Mahavira. However, merchants moving along are also not wanting. Thus, Palita, a disciple of Mahavira and resident of Campa came on business to the town of Pihunda. Of inland riverine trade, Mithila is spoken of as a port and sea-merchants from Campa used to come here for purposes of trade.

Overseas foreign trade was flourishing and there were sea-ports on the eastern (Tamalitti and Pihunda) and western (Duarika) coasts. The *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra* refers to Pihunda as a sea-coast town. It has been taken as identical with Pithunda-Pithundaga of the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela and Pityndra of Ptolemy which Levi located in the interior of Maisolia between the mouths of the two rivers Maisolos (Godavari) and Manados (Mahanadi). There are stories of mariners and of winged horses who came to the rescue of ship-wrecked mariners. That sea faring by merchants and others was quite common may be assumed from such names as Samudravijaya and Samudrapala, the son of Campa merchant Palita. The boy was so called because he was born on the sea. In the story of Sripala the merchant Dhavala was about to leave the port of Dvarika for foreign countries with 500 ships loaded with merchandise.

Leaving apart the congenial political factors the boom in trade and commerce presupposes a good money in circulation, development of the banking industry, and some amount of royal control over traders and merchants. As regards the first point, details are lacking in our sources. But some allusions are there which go to prove the contention. It is stated that the Lord Mahavira before renouncing the world gave alms and distributed gold coins for one year. This could not have been possible for him had there not been a large sum of money in circulation. Again, the monk Nandisena is said to have procured by magic 12 *kotis* of gold pieces to the coutezen in whose house he happened to go for begging alms.

Quite a number of bankers (*setthi*) are mentioned in our texts. Naga, a rich banker made his son marry in one day thirty-two girls, all

daughters of bankers. In the same way, Abhayakumara met several bankers at Rajagrha alone.

It is normal that in such a society certain vices of economic nature would creep in. In the list of gross transgressions of the vow of honesty the *Uvāsagdasāo* mentions smuggling, use of false weights and measures, trade in contrabands, etc. In the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra* among partial transgressions (*aticāra*) of the third vow (*adatta*) figures abetment of theft, receiving stolen property, illegal traffic, false weight and adulteration. To check such malpractices and other offences, it seems that kings used to issue what may be called pass-ports and licences (*rāyavarasāsana*). The *Mahānisīha Sūya* contain the story of the son of a maid-servant who was brought up by the king and later appointed superintendent of a slaughter-house (*sūṇādhivai*). Deterrent measures were also taken. Thus the merchant Dhanva of Rajagrha was tied in a wooden frame for a slight offence.

Among the liberal professions mention has to be made of the physicians some of whom were definitely quacks. To cure an unfortunate woman of the love-spell of her captor-seducer, she was made to drink milk mixed with the powdered bones of the wicked philanderer who was a frier. If this was witchcraft pure and simple, a healthy development is also discernible. There were colonies of leper. In the story of Sripala who was then afflicted with leprosy, his mother started for Kausambi where lived a physician who had the reputation of curing all sorts of leprosy.

The Sudras as a caste existed only in theory. Even then like the term Brahmana, it came to signify a mode of conduct or a state of attitude. In the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra* it is stated that the possessor of good qualities is a Brahmana and the reverse, a Sudra. The same text contrasts the Brahmanas and the Ksatriyas with the Candalas. It will thus appear that in the early Jaina texts there is a tendency to use terms Sudra and Candala as synonymous In the same section of *Uttarādhyayana* mentioned above the Candalas have been equated with worms and ants. That is to say, juridic personality was denied to the Sudra-Candalas. In this sense, only a slave would have to be called a Sudra or Candala. However, Harikesabala was born in a Candala family and explicitly or implicitly had no stigma of servitude attached to him. He is said to have possessed all the virtues and practised the rules. But the inferriority this social status vis-a-vis the Brahmanas is clearly established from the fact that when he had a quarrel with the Brahmanas, they gave him a sound beating. In connexion with the Sudra Candalas, mention

has to be made of certain lowly callings like those of wood-gatherers (*kātthāhāragā*), leaf-gatherers (*pattāhāragā*) and grass-cutters (*tuṇā-hāragā*). These people roamed in forests. Again certain occupations like those of the professional boar-killers, fish-catchers, fowlers, hunters and the like were regarded with disapprobation because the practice of these involved commitment of violence.

This study of social hierarchy as given in the early Jaina texts will not be complete without some consideration of the institution of slavery. Two or three different modes of acquiring a slave are known : (I) prisoners of war, (ii) sale and (iii) gift or conditional sale. During the war between the father of Vasumati-Candana and king Satanika, Candana was taken prisoner and thus became a slave She was next sold by a camel-driver to Dhanavaha, a banker of Kausambi. The sale of Sujjhasiri and Amara-kumara by their respective fathers has been already narrated. The story of Sujjhasiri states that she was later given away to cowherd woman by her purchaser who had then become poor as the result of a long drawn famine in Avanti. The cowherd woman undertook to supply milk to his family. It is not clear from the account whether she received Sujjha-siri as a gift or this was a case of conditional sale.

The slaves we come across in our texts were all employed in domestic service. In the palace there were numerous maids. In well-to-do families there were five kinds of nurses to tend children, viz., wet nurse (*khīra*), toilet-nurse (*mandana*) bath-nurse (*majjana*), play-nurse (*kilavana*) and lap-nurse (*anka*).

Little safeguard the wretched slave-girls seemed to possess against the concupiscence of their masters. Thus the daughter of a *purohita* was in the service of a grocer. She became pregnant and felt the longing for flesh and groats. To procure these she sold the valuables of her master and was punished by the king for stealing. She was home-interned till the delivery of the child who became the property of the king. The lot of the slaves was very hard. For certain lapses the nun Lakkhana-vati was reborn as the maid of a hetaira. She was very handsome to look at and attracted the admiring looks of the clients of her mistress who then decided to cut off her ears, nose and lips. She was able to flee and later even to marry a rich merchant of Samkhanda. But one night the first wife of her husband thrust into her abdomen a fire-brand twice, and she succumbed to her injury. It will be interesting to know if her murderer had the right to inflict injuries on her. In other words, whether even after her marriage, Lakkhanavati continued to be consi-dered a slave-girl. To take one more example. Mula was the wife of

the banker Dhanavaha who had purchased Candana. When the latter came of age, she became very beautiful and Mula was apprehensive that Dhanavaha might one day marry her. So out of jealousy, she cut off Candana's hair and put her into custody.

Emancipation of slaves is known. In the above story, Candana afterwards became a nun. But it is not clear whether a slave was required to be emancipated before joining the Order or after joining it became *ipso facto* free.

Omniscient Beings

HARISATYA BHATTACHARYYA

To have an idea of the Omniscient Beings, as the Jainas understand them, a study of the nature of omniscience and Omniscient Beings, as conceived in the Indian non-Jaina systems of philosophy may serve as an illuminating preliminary.

The Liberated State and Omniscience : The Buddhist View

Save and except the Mimansa, the Vedic systems of philosophy mostly admit that there is a God, on whose will and intelligent efforts depend the creation, the preservation and the annihilation of the world and in whatever manner he may be called—the *Pradhāna*, the *Iśvara*, the *Saguṇa-Brahma* or the *Purāṇa Puruṣa*—God is omniscient. The Jainas do not admit the existence of an architect God and so the question of divine omniscience does not arise with them. So far as the doctrine of God's omniscience is concerned, the Buddhist position is similar to that of the Jainas The Buddhists also do not believe in the existence of God. Therefore, the problem boils itself down to this : Either the finite beings are capable of attaining omniscience or omniscience is an impossibility. Now, with regard to the problem of omniscience in finite beings, the Buddhist attitude may be indicated in the following manner.

That the mundane unliberated souls are not omniscient is admitted not only by the Mimansakas but by all the philosophers. The fact is a matter of observation and not denied by the Buddhisst. The liberated souls are, in the language of the Buddhist *nirvāṇatā-gata*, i.e., in the state of *nirvāṇa*. Scholars have differed regarding the meaning of *nirvāṇa* but with respect to omniscience in the liberated, the difference is of no effect. For if *nirvāṇa* means extinction like that of the light of an extinguished lamp, then a *Jiva* is no more alive when it enters the *nirvāṇa*, so that it is quite meaningless to talk of it then as omniscient. If, on the other hand, *nirvāṇa* means a state (*śaraṇam*, *parayaṇam* or *akṣaram*) which is everlasting (*anantam*, *acyūtam*, *asemkhatam* or *anuttaram*) and which has been described in the sacred books of the Buddhists as blessed and true (*khīmam sivam saccam kevalam padam*) then a being in

nirvāṇa may not be devoid of existence ; but with regard to a being in such a state also, the question of omniscience does not arise. For, according to the Buddhists, *taṇhā* is at the root of all knowledge ; owing to *taṇhā*, momentary apprehensions regarding momentary objects arise every moment. This series of momentary apprehensions (*santāna*) stops absolutely when *nirvāna* is attained at the annihilation of *vāsanā*, —so that it is not possible for a *Jīva* who has attained the *nirvāṇa* to have omniscience or knowledge of all or any of the objects of the world.

The Liberated State and Omniscience : The Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika Views

Just as omniscience is impossible in a being who has entered the state, called the *nirvāṇa* by the Buddhist, it is impossible in a similar way in a soul which has attained absolute liberation, called *apavarga* by the Naiyayikas. According to Gautama, desire, aversion, effort, pleasure, pain and knowledge are the attributes or peculiar characteristics of a soul ; some add three other attributes to this list. In any case the theory of the Nyaya philosophy is that when *apavarga* or final emancipation is attained, all those attributes or characteristics of the soul leave it absolutely.

tadivam dhiṣanādīnām navānāmapi mūlatah
gunamātmāno dhamsah so'pavargah pratiṣthitah

In a *Jīva* which has attained *apavarga, jñāna* or consciousness is absurd just like its other attributes, so that when one thinks that the state of liberation, as conceived by Gautama, is not unlike the absolutely passive and unconscious state of a stone ;

muktaye yan śilātvāya śastramūce sacitasam
—*Naiṣadhīya-Caritam*, 17/75

he is not probably wrong.

According to the Vaisesikas also, the soul is in the state of liberation, when on the annihilation all its attributes, e.g., consciousness, etc ; it exists like the expanse of sky.

atyanta-nāśe guṇa-samgateryā sthitirnabhvaet kaṇāda-pakṣe muktih......
—*Samkṣepa-Samkara-Vijayah*, 16/69

A liberated soul is thus unconscious ; so that it must be understood to be the theory of the Nyaya and the Vaisesika systems that a liberated soul cannot be omniscient. Although some of the Naiyayikas hold that there is a feeling of eternal happiness (*nitya-sukha*) in a soul in its liberated state, it is the common contention of all the Naiyayikas that the liberated soul has no consciousness of the world and its objects. Consequently, the emancipated being is not omniscient.

The Liberated State and Omniscience : The Advaita Vedānta View

According to the Vedantins of the Advaita (absolute monist) school, neither the bondage nor the emancipation of the soul is real. If from the *vyavahāra* or empirical standpoint, a soul be said to be freed from its state of bondage,—even then, omniscience cannot be attributed to the emancipated being. For, a liberated soul is nothing but a soul 'in itself' ; in such a soul, which is absolutely non-dual consciousness there can be no 'internal division' (*svagatabheda*). And because there is nothing outside it which is similar to or dissimilar from it, there cannot be distinction of it 'from its similars' (*sajātīyabheda*) or 'from its dissimilars' (*vijātīya-bheda*) A liberated soul is not knower but consciousness itself ; there is nothing beside it :

neha nānasti kincana

Owing to *avidyā* or false knowledge, of course, there may be consciousness of outside objects in a soul in bondage,

yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati taditara itaram paśyati

But in its state of liberation, there is nothing outside or beside it—so that a liberated soul has no consciousness of objects other than itself.

yatra tasya sarvamātmaivābhūt tatra kena kim paśyet

Accordingly, from the standpoint of the Advaita Vedanta, Omniscience in a liberated being is impossible.

The Liberated State and Omniscience The Sānkhya and the Yoga Views

The philosophers of the Sankhya and the Yoga schools maintain that the evolution of the world is due to the conjunction of the *Prakṛti* and the *Puruṣa*. The soul may be said to be in a state of bondage as long as

the *Prakṛti* remains proximate to it. The soul, however, is absolutely incompatible; there cannot be any real connection of the *Prakṛti* with it. It is owing to *aviveka* or ignorance that the essentially incorruptible *Puruṣa* is looked upon as affected or influenced by the *Prakṛti*.

nihsangehpyuparagoh vivekāt
—*Sānkhya Sūtram : Tantrārtha-Samkṣepadhyāya*. 28

When a red flower is held over a glass-ware, the shade of redness falls upon the latter and makes it appear as red, but the real nature of the glass-ware is not modified in the least thereby. In the same manner, proximate-ness of the *Prakṛti* to the *Puruṣa* makes no change in the essential nature of the latter.

jabā-sphatikariva noparāgah kincitābhimānah
—*Ibid.*, 29

It is thus that owing to *aviveka*, the soul is considered to be in bondage when the *Prakṛti* is near it and that it is said to be emancipated when the *Prakṛti* is no longer near it. Really there is no relation whatsoever between the *Puruṣa* on the one hand and the *Prakṛti* with its evolutes on the other. When a soul is liberated, it is even impossible to imagine a connection. The liberated *Puruṣa* cannot thus be said to be omniscient or a knower of all things, according to the principles of the Sankhya and the Yoga systems.

It is consequently clear that the Buddhist and the Vedic systems agree that not only are the mundane souls not omniscient but that the liberated and he finally disembodied souls also are not such.

The Stage Penultimate to Liberation and Omniscience: The Yoga View

Although neither a mundane soul nor an emancipated being is omniscient, a soul *on the way to liberation* may be possessed of a kind of knowledge, just before its final emancipation, which may be called omniscience. The author of the *Yoga-Sūtras* calls it *prātibha* and the Sankhya also believes in its possibility. According to Patanjali, one possessed of the *prātibha* has the knowledge of all things.

prātibhād vā sarvam
—*Yoga-Sūtram, Bibhūti-pādah*, 34

Upon which Bhoja raja comments ;

yathodeśyati savitari pūrvam prabhā
prādurbhavati tadvadvivekakhyāteh
pūrvam tārakam sarva-viṣayam
Jñānamābirbhavati

Just as immediatly before the sun-rise a brilliant glow is visible in the sky, in the same manner just before the rise of *viveka-khyāti* or consciousness of emancipation, there arises the knowledge, called *tāraka*. Through (To) this *tāraka* knowledge, all things are known.

This *tāraka* is otherwise called the *prātibha*.

The Stage Penultimate to Liberation and Omniscience : The Sankhya View

The Sankhya school of philosophers attribute to the Yogis or sages, a supernatual mode of perception, in which all things and phenomena of all places and of all times are cognised and they account for it in this way. The Yogis or seers, through their penances and self-perfection attain a power by which they come in direct contact with the *Pradhāna*, the potential basis of all things; as all things evolve from the *Pradhāna* and on their dissolution enter into it, the *Pradhāna* is the real substance in which all phenomena live, move and have their being. By 'seeing' the *Pradhāna*, one sees all things evolving out of it. It is thus that the Yogis being in contact with the universal basis of all things through their supernatural attainment are enabled to perceive all things

līna-vastu-labdhātiśaya-sambandhat
—*Sānkhya-Sūtram, Viṣayadhyāya*, 89

The commentator explains,

sat-kārya-sthiter naṣṭamapi sva-karaṇe līnam bhūtatvenāśti bhaviṣyadapi sva-kāraṇebhāgatatvenasti-yogajadharmānugrahāllabdhātiśaya yasya yogina eva pradhāna-sambandhat sarva-diśakālādi-sambandha iti

The effect is existent in the cause. What is found to perish exists in a potential state in its basal ground. What is future exists in its cause as something not come as yet. On account of their attainment of supernatural power of vision, the Yogi come in contact with the *Pradhāna* and through this contact, they come in contact with (things of) all places and all times.

This supernatural power of vision in the Yogi is practically omniscience. Thus although the Sankhya philosophers do not believe in divine omniscience nor in the omniscience of a liberated being, they admit the possibility of omniscience in the Yogis or persons on the high way to self-culture.

The Stage Penultimate to Liberation and Omniscience : The Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika Views

The thinkers of the Nyaya school maintain that it is impossible for the instrument (*karana*) of knowledge to be simultaneously connected with more than one percept; for this reason, a simultaneous cognition of all things is impossible according to them. But they admit that the recollections of all things or cause of the cognitions of all things, may simultaneously present themselves to a sage, when he may be possessed of a knowledge which relates to the whole collection of the objects Such a knowledge has been called by them *samūhālambana* or collective knowledge. This *samūhālambana* is practically indentical with the *prātibha*-knowledge noticed before and consists in a sort of omniscience.

The Vaisesika thinkers have given the name '*ārṣa-jñāna* or 'the knowledge of a seer' to the *prātibha* which relates to the knowledge of all things.

[*To be Continued*

Jain Influence on Jesus

—a surmise—

K. V. KRISHNA AYYAR

The influence of Jainism in foreign lands has not received the attention of historians as Buddhism has done. It is due to the fact that so far no relic of Jainism has been discovered outside India. It might again be due to the considerable resemblance between Jainism and Buddhism. For a long time, even in the land of their origin, there has been a tendency to regard them as more or less identical. In both the fundamental basis is the Law of *Karma*, in both God is conspicuous by His absence; both stress individual effort; according to them every man is the architect of his own fortune. In both we have saints first as models and exemplars and afterwards as guides lending a helping hand

The object of this paper is to probe into the question whether there had been Jaina influences in West Asian regions and hence on Jesus Christ. This is at best only an interesting surmise, for no clear evidences to support it are available. However certain remote, circumstantial evidences could be traced that may lend some plausibility to the view which is worth investigation. In the first place it will be admitted on all hands that there is a big gap between the Old Testament and the New Testament, between Moses and the Prophets on the one hand and Jesus on the other. Secondly, there is a gap in the life of Jesus between his twelfth and thirtieth year and during this period, as held by some writers, he might have visited India or places close to the north-west border of India. Thirdly, there is a very great similarity between the teachings of Mahavira and Jesus, especially in their emphasis on truth, non-violence, chastity, the importance of good deeds, and indifference to worldly wealth and possessions. Both also helped and healed everyone without distinction of birth or sex and both recognised no difference between man and man. According to some writers, these resemblances could not have been merely accidental. And as Mahavira lived and taught five hundred years before Jesus, the former could not have been influenced by the latter. It should have been the other way : either Jesus had come to India and imbibed Jainism, or he must have come into contact with Jainism nearer home.

It was not however necessary for Jesus to come to India to imbibe the Jaina teachings. According to Luke (LLL, 23) in his thirtieth year

he became disciple of his cousin John the Baptist. John the Baptist belonged to the ascetic order of the Essenes, who lived in the wildernesses of Syria and Palestine.

The origin of the Essenes has been a matter of much speculation among scholars. I believe that they were Jainas belonging to the Sena Gana. The Sena Gana was one of the four orders of the Jaina monks, the other three being Nandi Gana, Vira Gana and Daiva Gana. Ever since the invasion of the Punjab by Darius in 518-516 B.C. Indian thought began slowly to infiltrate towards the West. Just as Palli and Patarar point to Jaina association in S. India, Monk and Monasticism point to Jaina influence in the West. Some Jaina monks seem to have accompanied Alexander the Great, and after his death even proceeded to the Mediterranean. With the establishment of the kingdom of Syria from Punjab to the Mediterranean by Seleucus and of his embassy at the court of Candragupta Maurya some time about 303 B.C the infiltration strengthened into a regular stream, especially as Candragupta was very favourably disposed towards the Jainas and himself became a Jaina monk in 297 B C. The reign of Candragupta's grandson Asoka (272-232) witnessed the despatch of a number of Buddhist missionaries to the Mediterranean countries, Syria, Egypt, Macedon, Corinth and Epirus. We may take it that though the Buddhists were fortunate to receive royal patronage, the Jaina monks, with their inborn daring, strength and sacrifice, also went in large numbers to the West. In the first century before Christ the Jaina monks formed a not inconsiderable proportion of the literati in the West.

Whatever it is in the first century B.C. Philo records the number of Essenes in Palestine and Syria as 4000. They supported themselves by manual and agricultural labour. They never made any weapons. They observed their time in study, benevolence, and in supporting the aged and the sick. Some married and lived with their wives and children and afterwards became monks. The world had no attraction for them. The younger respected the older, the elders were chosen as leaders. They preferred the country to the city. They wore simple white garments. They had no spare clothes. They observed absolute purity in food. Their preliminary training as novitiate lasted for three years.

They took an oath to be always pious to their deity (Tirthankara), to practise justice, never to injure anyone either of his own accord or under compulsion, to always hate the wicked, and side the just, ever to show kindness and faithfulness to all mankind (faith in their essential goodness) and be true to those in authority, never to force their personal

views when in authority or assume special dress or luxury, to love truth and hate falsehood, to keep his hand free of theft, and his soul from unrighteous gain, not have any secret from the brethren, to pass on the traditions they have received to others and ever to safeguard them, and to observe the weekly sabbath day. So good were they that the worst tyrant could not charge them with anything.

Not different in external practices from the Essenes were the Therapeutists. They lived in mean and scattered homes. They met every week for prayer. They lived in Egypt. No flesh was served with their fasts. They had a special posture for prayer. Their discipline was very severe. They despised money. They lived a lonely life except for their weekly meetings for prayer. They were attendants and physicians.

The Therapeutists might be Jainas or Buddhists. As the Jainas were more concerned with tending the aged and the sick Therapeutists also might have been Jainas Christ's cures described in the Gospels need not be due to special interventions of God He might have learned medicine during his association with the Jainas. Some identify the Therapeutists with the Theravadins, a sect of Hinayana Buddhists. If it is correct, we may say that Jesus owed something also to the Buddhists.

The existence of these two sects, Essenes and Therapeutists, is a historical fact and their social influence, on the basis of numerous references about them, is also undoubted. But their proper identification has yet to be made. If this is done it can provide a very important clue to the understanding of Jaina (and also Buddhist) influences outside India. It is a problem worth investigation and study.

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A Tri-tirthika Jina Image from the enclosure wall of the Temple No. 12, Deogarh

An Unpublished Tri-Tirthika Jaina Image from Deogarh

MARUTI NANDAN PRASAD TIWARI

The prolific Jaina site of Deogarh, situated in the Jhansi District of Uttar Pradesh, has yielded an immense amount of material of archaeological and art-historical interest spread over the ninth (862) to the twelfth century.[1] The Jaina sculptures of Deogarh are the products exclusively of the Digambara sect which is indicated by the fact that the standing Jinas are shown as sky-clad (Digambara) and also by the occurrence of the sixteen auspicious dreams on the door-lintel of the Temple No. 12 instead of the fourteen as is usual with the Svetambaras.[2]

The site has yielded a large number of separate Jina images representing the Jinas in two customary postures, namely, the *kāyotsarga-mudrā* (standing erect with hanging arms) and the *dhyānamudrā* (seated cross-legged with palms in the lap). The Jina images of Deogarh also include the *dvi-tīrthika*, *tri-tīrthika*[3] and the *caumukha* Jina figures. We may note here in passing that we could find only eleven out of the twenty-four Jinas in Deogarh collections.[4] Besides the Jina images, an adequate number of *Yakṣī* figures are also scattered over the site.[5] The collective rendering of the series of the 24 *Yakṣīs*, considered to be the earliest known (862) group representation of the 24 *Yakṣīs*, finds depiction on the

[1] The earliest inscription at the site comes from the Temple No. 12 (Santinatha Temple). The inscription is dated in *Samvat* 919 (A.D. 862).

[2] These auspicious dreams were seen by the respective mothers of all the twenty-four Jinas immediately after the formation of their foetus.

[3] Some of the peculiar *tri-tirthika* Jina images of Deogarh contain the figures of Sarasvati and Bahubali, the son of Rsabhanatha. For details consult my papers—'A Unique Tri-tirthika Jina Image from Deogarh', *Lalit Kala*, No. 17, pp. 41-42, 'A Note on Some Bahubali Images from North India', *East and West*, New Series, Vol. 23, Nos. 3-4, Sept-Dec 1973, pp. 352-53.

[4] Rsabhanatha, Ajitanatha, Sambhavanatha, Abhinandana, Padmaprabha, Suparsvanatha, Candraprabha, Santinatha, Neminatha, Parsvantha, Mahavira.

[5] However, the concrete manifestations of the *Yaksas* were not popular at the site and only a few instances of Gomukha and Kubera (or Sarvanubhuti) *Yaksas* are available at the site.

exterior wall of the Temple No. 12 Moreover, a sufficient number of separate figures of Cakresvari, Rohini, Ambika, Padmavati and Siddhayika, respectively the *Yakṣīs* of Rsabhanatha, Ajitanatha, Neminatha, Parsvanatha and Mahavira, are also available at the site.

In the present paper, we wish to study the iconographic features of an important *Tri-tīrthika* Jina image representing the three most popular Jinas—Neminatha, Parsvanatha and Mahavira, respectively the twenty-second, twenty-third and twenty-fourth Jinas—of the site of Deogarh at one place[6]. The image, fashioned in the buff sandstone, is incorporated in the northern enclosure wall of the Temple No. 12. It is assignable to the eleventh century on stylistic and iconographic grounds. The image exhibits three Jinas showing indentical iconographic details except for the rendering of their identifying cognizances The whole image is much mutilated

Each of the three Jinas is shown as sky-clad and standing in the *kāyotsarga-mudrā* on a carpet spread over the *siṁhāsana*, supported by two lions. The lions, in each case, are represented with their backs and necks turned towards each other and one paw raised. The two lions, in each instance, are intervened by a *dharmacakra* over which hangs a covering cloth from the pedestal, with the respective emblems of the Jinas. On the strength of these cognizances, starting from the right (from viewer's standpoint), the Jinas can be identified with Neminatha (with conch emblem), Parsvanatha (with sanke emblem) and Mahavira (with lion emblem). The middle figure of Parsvanatha is also provided with the sevenhooded cobra overhead

Each Jina, marked with a *śrīvatsa* symbol on the chest, has his hair done in small curls with a protuberance—*uṣṇīṣa*. Excepting Parsvanatha, canopied by snake hoods, the other two Jinas are provided with plain aureoles. The Jinas, in each case, are flanked by a pair of standing male attendants bedecked in usual jewelleries and carrying a flywhisk held above the shoulder by one hand and the other being resting on the thigh. Close to the feet of each Jina there occur two adorers with hands folded in *namaskāra-mudrā* Over the head of each Jina is carved a *chatratrayī* topped by a prostrate figure beating a drum and joined by a pair of hovering *mālādharas*. The customary rendering of the *Yakṣa-Yakṣī* figures, carved at throne ends, are conspicuous by their absence.

[6] However, it is a solitary instance representing Neminatha, Parsvanatha and Mahavira at one place

GLEANINGS

Jainism

[The following came in answer to a query about Jainism from the Secretary of the Vegan Society to a correspondent in Bombay. The writer did not intend it for publication—she says she would have spent more time and care in its composition had she so intent—but she has given permission for it to appear and the Secretary feels it will be of great interest and help to readers.]

...As for Jainism—Jainism is the religion of Jina. Jina is the One who has won over himself. There are 24 Jinas of whom Lord Mahavira is the last. I shall write about some of the principles: "All the living things love life. Nobody likes pain or death. So it is our duty to see that we cause no pain or death to any living things." I personally believe that Jainism is not only religion but also has scientific principles. If we have to be the cause for any life's pain or death, it should be to the minimum. Vegetation feels less pain than other living things. 2500 years ago, Jainism had said that even the vegetation has feelings. This was proved about 50 years ago by scientists. Jainism has set up particular days in each month when we do not eat even green vegetable with a view to letting vegetation rest. Jainism has said that water should not be drunk without being boiled. The food or water should be taken only during the day-time and not after sunset. This all, I believe, is very hygenic.

Living things are divided into 5 groups—more the senses, more is the feeling of pleasure or pain.

1. Lives with one sense i.e. those who do not move and have no other senses than the sense of touch. The vegetation comes into this group.

2. Lives with two senses i.e. feeling of touch due to the body and the second sense is in the mouth. Worms come into this category.

3. Lives with three senses i.e. feeling, eating by mouth and nose i.e. the sense of smell. Bugs, cockroaches, ants. etc. come in this category.

4. Lives having four senses. Feeling (skin), eating (mouth), smelling (nose), and the sense of seeing. Butterflies, flies, spiders etc. come in this category.

5. Lives with five senses. Feeling (skin), eating (mouth), smelling (nose), seeing (eyes) and hearing (ears.). All animals, birds, fishes and also

human beings come into this category. This category is again divided into two: namely the animal and the human. Human being, though he has all the five senses like other animals, is much superior because he has the power to think and so he can judge what is good and what is bad.

The Theory of *Karma* (Deeds) is very important. It is the same as said in English "Reap as you sow". Whatever we do—good or bad, we get the returns equivalent to our deeds. You will be surprised to know that Jainism does not teach belief in God as such, i.e. the supreme power who will help us or do anything for us. Lord Mahavira and the other 23 are not Gods but shall we say Guides. They are the Great Souls who have relieved themselves from the cycle of birth and death by following certain principles and certain ways of life. Thus they have made a path of salvation for their followers They can do nothing more for us. We have to study the principles that they have put before us and the way they followed these during their lives. The first and the most important principle that they laid before us is "Non injury is the highest religion". Non-injury means cessation of evil.

"Do not hurt physically, by speech or by thought." Hurting physically means slapping, killing etc. where the body is hurt. Hurting by speech means talking in the manner that can harm the other persons feeling or create some sort of mental torture. Hurting by thought means thinking or desiring something that is bad for others Thus my hitting a person or insulting him by using bad words or thinking that he is a bad man so he should suffer— all three are sinful

"Anything done, got done, or confirmed if bad, is sinful" i.e whether I kill a life by my own hands or I ask somebody to do it, or if somebody is doing it and I admire—all these are sinful. Thus my enjoying horse racing, shooting or bull fighting is a sin because thereby I am encouraging the trade.

"A thing whose ingredients or the way of production is not known to us should not be used" This principle is very difficult for ordinary people to follow because of the modern life. In the olden days, all the basic necessities of life were produced in the same village. But now, when the things are made in factories in other cities or other countries, we cannot know the ingredients. That is why for years we ate jelly not knowing that it contains gelatine; cheese, not knowing that during its process a cheese has to be made with the help of rennet.

—Malini Mehta, Bombay

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Relevance of Jainism to Modern Times

A. K. JAIN

The 25th centenary celebrations of Lord Mahavira's Nirvana draw to a close. We have just listened to an illuminating talk about Mahavira and his teachings. It is but natural if we ask ourselves, does a religion founded thousands of years back and professed by not more than three million people, have any relevance in today's world? What is Jainism? The word 'Jain' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Jina', which means 'Conqueror'. Anyone who has conquered the senses is a 'Jina' and his follower is a Jain. The Jains believe that there were 23 Tirthankaras before Mahavira and that Mahavira was the 24th Tirthankara. 'Tirthankara' literally means 'ford-maker'—a person who makes bridges across the stream of existence. Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara, was a contemporary of Gautama Buddha. Parsvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankara, was definitely a historical figure who lived in 8th century B.C. But, the present form of Jainism is the contribution of Mahavira.

I'll now take up some basic tenets of Jainism and attempt to examine if they have any relevance today, particularly to the community at large. Jainism lays great stress on *samyak darśana, samyak jñāna and samyak cāritra*, viz., Right Belief, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. All three must go together. One is not complete without the other. Even a right action is nullified if the motive is impure; similarly, the best of motives cannot justify an immoral action. This is exactly what Mahatma Gandhi stoutly maintained. The means are as important as the end—the end just cannot justify the means. We are living in a world where people do lots of things and get away with them. Even this year there have been events the world over which have made us exclaim, 'It seems one can get away with anything' or, 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Now this is a very dangerous symptom. If not checked in time, it leads to a coarsening of the conscience and to a particularly ugly form of cynicism. This is the thinking that leads to the annexation of Tibet or the 1971 happenings in Bangladesh. This is what opens the floodgate to Watergates. If we are to ensure that politics retains some modicum of decency, that it does not degenerate into gangsterism, we may profitably turn to the three gems of Right Belief, Right Knowledge and Right Action.

Again, Jainism lays stress on *aparigraha* that is renunciation of worldly belongings or non-accumulation of things. Now there are several misnomers about the meaning of this word. *Aparigraha* does not mean that there should be no worldly belongings—it is immaterial if there are things or not, what is important is that man is above his belongings—the belongings cannot chain him down. I'll illustrate this with a story. Once a king went hunting into a dense forest. There he saw a Sanyasi under a tree deep in meditation, practising severe penance. The king was very much impressed by him and requested the ascetic to accompany him to the capital. The ascetic readily agreed, to the slight disappointment of the king. Once in the royal palace, the ascetic rapidly settled in the royal way of living, eating rich food and leading a luxurious existence. Once while they were strolling in the garden, the king remarked, 'O Sanyasi, what is the difference between you and me? You eat the same food, wear the same clothes.' The Sanyasi said, 'Come, I'll explain the difference.' They started walking towards the border of the kingdom. After some time, the king said, 'Let's stop.' The Sanyasi said, 'Keep walking.' After going a couple of miles further, the king said, 'Let's go back; we are near the frontier of my kingdom ' The Sanyasi said, 'Now, do you realise the difference? I can leave these luxuries any time I like, but you cannot ' and saying this he kept on walking despite all the entreaties of the king to stay back.

Many people complain that Jainism is unsuited to today's world because it is the path of asceticism and lays undue stress on *tyāga* or sacrifice. It is true that Jainism emphasises the virtues of sacrifice or self-denial but it must be clearly understood that any unworthy sacrifice cannot lead to happiness. One does not become happy by renouncing worldly things—on the other hand one renounces them because he is happy and does not need those things. If anyone misses those things or talks about them or cannot get over the fact that he has renounced them, he can never be happy. If a man has renounced certain things, it is nothing to be proud of, or to exult about or to gloat over. Then it ceases to be *tyāga*—it becomes something of a punishment. Another thing—only that man can sacrifice something who has it, who has enjoyed it. There is no merit in a teetotaller giving up drinking or a pauper abjuring riches.

One aspect of Jainism which merits recognition and implementation is Mahavira's call of "Live and Let Live". All around us we hear of peaceful co-existence. International conferences are held where speaker after speaker harps on this theme It may be co-existence of countries, of conflicting ideologies or of economic doctrines. What is important is that I must recognise the others' right to co-exist alongside. This is what

Mahavira preached and professed 2500 years ago. Actually, he went one better. His message of 'Live and Let Live' was intended to include not only fellow human-beings but also the dumb creatures—animals, birds and all living beings. This is the message of *jīvadayā*—mercy towards all creatures. It is heartening to find this being taken up all the world over. Almost all countries have Societies for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, organisations like Animal's Friends. There is a big campaign for Wild Life Preservation, its patrons include Prince Bernhard, Paul Getty and the Duke of Edinburgh. When the tiger, the lion, the bison or the rhino has the right to exist, why not the harmless lamb or the meek cow?

Closely related to this concept of *jīva-dayā* is the most important Jain doctrine of *ahimsā* or non-violence It is so much intertwined with Jain thinking that the two are almost taken to be synonymous. Now *ahimsā* is of great pith and importance in the world today. In the not so distant past, Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated that *ahimsā* could also be a way of life, an instrument of policy, a weapon of fighting the mighty British Raj. It is no longer an empty consolation for the weak or a fashionable fad. It is supremely relevant in the world that we live in. Statesmen of all countries are agreed that a third world war must be avoided at all costs. They know what an utterly ruinous war that is going to be, with no holds barred. Nuclear weapons and the latest sophisticated means of destruction are going to be employed—that is why all right-thinking men get alarmed about small conflicts. It must be said to their credit that they have succeeded so far. If we can adopt *ahimsā* as a way of life, as an instrument of national policy and international dealings, the atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, fear and threats can be cleared. 'Make love, not war' is not merely a fanciful utterance of the Hippies, it has to be inculcated in the young generation if the spectre of war is to be avoided.

I can do no better than to conclude with an invocation, which sums up the message of Mahavira :

sarve paśyantu bhadrāṇi sarve janāh sukhinah bhavantu

May all see the good, may all be happy.

A talk given at the Indian Embassy, Kabul, during the 25000th Centenary celebration of Mahavira's Nirvana

Correspondence

Sir, I have just received the July (Vol. XI No. 1) issue of the Quarterly and read Sri B. M. Singhi's article on Muni Jinvijayji. The article is full of information and the present younger generation has no knowledge of that Great Man. Hence I am giving my reminiscences.

When Muni Jinvijayji was in Poona I was a student in Poona Engineering College. In the Digambar Jain Boarding House we were reading *Tattvrthā Sutra.*

Many of us who were attached to Mill and Spencer's way of thinking did not see an eye to eye with our *śāstras* and some had become Atheists and I was one of them. I therefore decided to have an interview with Jinvijayji who was residing in the Svetambar Jain Boarding. While I received only rebuke from Jain Digambar monks, he gave me a patient hearing. I owe him a debt of gratitude as this interview turned me from Atheism to Theism. I met him many times afterwards and have been benefited by his advise.

In 1940 or so he presided over South Maharashtra Jain Conference (a Digambar body presided by Divan Bahadur Lathe, Ex-Finance Minister of Bombay). After Lathe's demise I had the honour to be the head of that body and I had kept up the non-secterian tone as propounded by Jinvijayji. In my heart of hearts I carry the image of the Great Muni Sri as my spiritual Guru.

Yours etc.,
Buddhaveerananda
(former M. H. Shah)
Nirvanashram, Shravanabelagola

Sept. 3, 1976

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ahimsā paramo dharmah

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or gets them hurt by others,
or approves of hurt done by others,
augments the world's hostility towards himself."

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—*Daśavaikālika, 6. 11*

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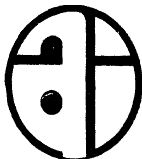
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—Bhagavan Mahavir

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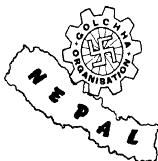
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